

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

26767

ACTION

March 22, 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR: DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Ashley C. Hewitt

SUBJECT: CIA Report on "The Changing Revolutionary Process in Latin America"

Attached at Tab A is an excellent analysis of the nature of the revolutionary process in Latin America, which has been forwarded to you by Director Helms of CIA. In his note to you, he recalls your conversation with the President on March 5; and as a consequence of that conversation, he thought you might be interested in seeing this paper.

I have summarized the study in the form of a memo to the President in the event you wish to send it forward. (Tab I). Also attached for your signature is a brief memo to Helms (Tab II).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That you sign the memo to the President at Tab I.
2. That you sign the memo to Director Helms at Tab II.

Attachments:

Tab I -- Memo to the President

Tab A - CIA Analysis

Tab II - Memo to CIA Director

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*If this study is what
is summarized
I consider it total
warrant.
See me.*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Henry A. Kissinger

SUBJECT: The Changing Revolutionary Process
in Latin America

Attached at Tab A is a penetrating and lucid CIA study on the nature of the revolutionary process in Latin America which, the analysis contends, is undergoing some basic changes. The study suggests that:

- the impulse for revolutionary change is gaining momentum in the Hemisphere, and in the end it will leave few countries unaffected;
- while revolution in Latin America will continue to be highly nationalistic and by definition anti-American to some degree, the new form revolution is likely to take in the decade ahead will probably be less violent and less adverse to our basic interests than it has been in the past.

The study begins by indentifying key factors determining the probable success of revolution, which it defines as fundamental or lasting change in the political and social structure of a country occurring within a relatively short period of time, whether by violent or peaceful means. These key factors are considered to be:

- A sufficient degree of public awareness of and frustration over the failure of the established order to meet growing social needs.
- The availability of the technological and institutional techniques (communications, organizational skills, etc.) needed to produce basic changes in the social order.
- The ability of the government in power to maintain public order and its claim to legitimacy in the face of growing pressure

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- The willingness of the government to risk its hold on power by initiating major reforms in time to head off violent revolution.

The greatest change is in the way revolution is likely to come about, the study concludes. The analysis says that:

- The main impetus for revolution now comes from within the institutions of the established power structure, the Church, the military, and the professional bureaucracies, rather than from insurgent parties and groups on the outside.
- Violence is an unavoidable fact of life in the region, but it is becoming less important as a factor in the revolutionary process. In no case have rural guerrillas or urban terrorists been able to topple or even seriously threaten their governments in the past decade, though not for want of trying.
- Communist groups in general have failed to influence the revolutionary process by insurgent or terrorist methods, and now tend to be attracted by non-violent, popular front tactics because of the success in Chile.
- The revolutionary process is not directly related to the stage of economic development, but instead tends to rise out of social frustrations arising from a leveling-off or downturn of the economic process at any level.

Communist elements will find it increasingly difficult to exploit anti-Americanism and turn it into revolutionary channels. Similarly, in the new establishment-based type of revolution that seems most probable in the future, leaders are likely to restrain outbursts of anti-U.S. violence and will themselves take measures to increase control over U.S. private investment in a more or less orderly fashion. The process of "Latinization" may be painful for U.S. investors, but in the long run U.S. businessmen can probably survive and adjust to it and still find attractive opportunities. While a decline in U.S. influence in the area seems inevitable, the study concludes, the new revolutionary forces themselves are not necessarily such as to threaten the basic security interests of the U.S., though the situation in Panama could prove to be an exception.

I believe the basic thrust of our mature partnership policy in Latin America is compatible with and supported by the conclusions of this study. We are now undergoing a comprehensive review of our policy in the Hemisphere in order to bring it still more closely into line with the conditions likely to prevail in the region over the next several years, and will take this study into account in our efforts to fine-tune the policy.

Attachment:

Tab A -- CIA memo

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AHewitt 3/16/71

Rewritt No Objection to Declassification in Full 2013/03/19 : LOC-HAK-12-5-66-0